



## HIRING A PROFESSIONAL TO ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR RAIN GARDEN AND/OR NATIVE PLANTING AREA

The planning and construction of a small rain garden and/or native planting area can usually be a do-it-yourself project; however in some instances, it is necessary to hire a professional. This professional must be a licensed engineer or landscape architect who can do the necessary calculations and submit the necessary plan sheets and technical information to the city for approval. You want to make sure the professional you hire is able to design your rain garden and/or native planting area to your satisfaction and also fulfill city requirements. This fact sheet is designed to help you get started in the process of hiring a professional to assist you with your rain garden and/or native planting area design and construction.

### IS A PROFESSIONAL REQUIRED?

If you're building a rain garden and/or native planting area requires city or other permits, you will be required to hire a professional. It is also a good idea to hire a professional if you have specific concerns regarding drainage or have clay soils which do not drain well. You will be required to hire a professional to design your rain garden and/or native planting area and sign off on the construction under the following circumstances:

- **Construction in a city right of way:** Any construction that disturbs ground outside of your property line and on city right of way.
- **Impact to city infrastructure:** Any construction that alters storm water inlets, storm water outlets or outfalls, swales, waterways or drainage ditches.

- **Greater than 1,000 square feet of disturbance:** Any construction project this size in Marion County requires a drainage permit and may require other permits as well.
- **Other instances:** If your property is located in a floodplain, historic district, wellhead protection area or other special use area, additional requirements may apply. Check the additional guidance on our permits page and call the department of code enforcement at 317-327-8700 to determine if you need to hire a professional for your specific circumstance.

### HOW DO I FIND A PROFESSIONAL?

Using recommendations from neighbors, online resources and other databases, you'll want to discuss your rain garden and/or native planting area needs with a professional engineer or landscape architect to find one that meets your needs. Ask about the following:

- What experience do you have with rain garden and/or native planting areas?
- Are you willing to work with homeowners?
- Are you knowledgeable about local requirements, permits and submittal to the city (as described on page 2)?
- Can you help me find an appropriate location and design for my rain garden and/or native planting area?

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- Can you help with drainage, infiltration and soil requirements for placing a rain garden on my property?
- Check out a list of local professionals provided on our website by Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District.

## WHAT SUBMITTALS DOES THE CITY REQUIRE?

★ Your professional engineer or landscape architect needs to be aware of all city requirements, briefly summarized below. Complete submittal guidelines are available from the Indianapolis Department of Code Enforcement at [www.indy.gov/eGov/City/CodeEnforcement/Permits/Pages/drainage.aspx](http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/CodeEnforcement/Permits/Pages/drainage.aspx).

- **Plan sheets:** Existing and proposed site conditions, site boundaries, legal description of the property and other requirements
- **Site development plan:** Contours, locations and elevations of site improvements, existing and proposed storm water conveyances with flow arrows, pipe and culvert elevations, property lines, floodway/floodplain elevations, surveying bench marks, information for inclusion in Indianapolis's GIS database, and other requirements (To complete this plan it is necessary to obtain a topographical survey of the project area.)

- **An erosion and sediment control plan:** Required for greater than 1 acre of soil disturbance
- **Construction guidelines:** Appropriate details for pipe installation, soil disturbance, construction equipment and other requirements.
- **Operation and Maintenance Manual:** Indicating the required maintenance procedures for ensuring the rain garden will continue to perform per the design as it ages
- **Certification by a registered professional:** Plans must be stamped by a registered professional engineer, land surveyor or architect. The registered professional must also sign an Obligation to Observe form, certifying that construction was conducted according to the approved submittal, as well as a Certificate of Sufficiency of Plan certifying that the design was consistent with the city's stormwater requirements.

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Mayor Ballard launched SustainIndy and created the Office of Sustainability in October 2008. SustainIndy is a bold and innovative enterprise aimed at delivering long-term cost savings to the City, building the local economy, improving our quality of life and enhancing our environmental and public health. Its efforts are designed to aggressively move Indianapolis forward in making it one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest.